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Minors Could See Jail Time for Possession of Alcohol

Senator Van Woerkom proposes to amend the Liquor Control Act

LANSING – A bill to amend the Liquor Control Act by increasing the punishment for minors in possession of alcohol was introduced in the Senate today by Sen. Gerald Van Woerkom.

Currently it is a misdemeanor for minors to possess alcohol but they do not face any time in jail. This bill would allow judges to sentence minors in possession of alcohol up to 90 days in jail.

“The current penalties for underage drinking do not have any teeth,” said Van Woerkom, R-Muskegon. “If we are to discourage underage drinking than the judges must have the tools they need to accomplish that goal.”

Sen. Van Woerkom worked with Muskegon District Judge Michael Nolan in drafting this legislation. “As a judge, I have seen that the current law does not go far enough in deterring young people from drinking. This bill will do that,” said Nolan. “I want to thank Sen. Van Woerkom for introducing this legislation. ”

Senate Bill 766 has been referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee.